

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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USIA-06 EB-07 /083 W

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R 271340Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7996

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BRASILIA 8280

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR-BR; PGOV-BR, EGEN

SUBJECT: PRESS HIGHLIGHTS FOREIGN POLICY ASPECTS OF PRESIDENT'S
JAPAN VISIT

REF: BRASILIA 7997 NOTAL

1. SUMMARY: BRAZILIAN PRESS, IMPRESSED BY AND GRATEFUL FOR
PRESIDENT'S UNCHARACTERISTIC WILLINGNESS TO OPEN UP
WITH THEM, HAS GIVEN BROAD AND FAVORABLE COVERAGE
TO PRESIDENT GEISEL'S JAPAN VISIT. MEDIA ARE PROCLAIMING THAT JAPAN
AND BRAZIL HAVE CREATED A NEW MODEL OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION
STRESSING "COMPLEMENTARITY" OF TWO ECONOMIES. PRESS HAS SUPPORTED
PRESIDENTIAL REAFFIRMATION OF BRAZIL'S THIRD WORLD IDENTIFICATION
BY EMPHASIZING GOB'S REFUSAL TO BE MEDIATOR BETWEEN NORTH AND
SOUTH AS SUGGESTED BY JAPANESE PRIME MINISTER. THEME OF AN
INDEPENDENT, MULTI-OPTIONED GOB FOREIGN POLICY COMES THROUGH
CELARLY IN VISIT. PRESS ALSO NOTED PRESIDENTIAL COMMENTS RE STRONG
AND FRIENDLY TIES GOB HAD TO US. (THOUGH PRESIDENT ADDED
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IN HUMAN RIGHTS VEIN, "THAT AMERICANS WANTED EVERYONE TO ADOPT

THEIR MODEL," AND BRAZILIANS SHOULD NOT BE BOTHERED BY CRITICS.) ON BALANCE PRESS TREATMENT HAS CONTRIBUTED TO IMAGE OF PRESIDENT AS STATESMAN-LIKE LEADER OF EMERGING POWER, HELPING TO BOOST GEISEL'S DOMESTIC POPULARITY AND PRESTIGE. WHILE NOT ENCOURAGING RE DOMESTIC POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION (SEPTEL), PRESIDENT WAS ABLE TO BALANCE BAD NEWS BY MAKING CLEAR THROUGH THE MEDIA THAT GOB IS COMMITTED TO INDEPENDENT AND DIGNIFIED COURSE ABROAD. END SUMMARY.

2. PRESIDENT GEISEL'S VISIT TO JAPAN SEPT 15-20 HAS DOMINATED FRONT PAGES OF BRAZILIAN PRESS AND TV NEWS COVERAGE FOR PAST WEEK. PRESS HAS REACTED POSITIVELY TO PRESIDENT'S WILLINGNESS TO ENGAGE IN INFORMAL GIVE-AND-TAKE WITH LARGE BRAZILIAN PRESS DELEGATION WHICH ACCOMPANIED HIM. AS A RESULT PUBLIC HAS BEEN TREATED TO STEADY STREAM OF PRESIDENTIAL COMMENT ABOUT GOB FOREIGN POLICY, THE SUBSTANCE OF NEGOTIATIONS AND DOMESTIC POLITICS (SEPTEL). SIGNIFICANT POINTS OF VISIT AND GEISEL'S STATEMENTS PLAYED UP BY PRESS ARE SUMMARIZED BELOW:

3. ECONOMIC ADVANTAGES OF VISIT. PRESS HAS HEADLINED ECONOMIC AGREEMENTS SIGNED BY PRESIDENTIAL PARTY IN TOKYO, QUANTIFYING PACKAGE AS \$12 BILLION IN JOINT COMMERCIAL UNDERTAKINGS. PRO-GOVERNMENT CORREIO BRAZILIENSE CLAIMED THAT BRAZIL AND JAPAN HAD CREATED A NEW INTERNATIONAL MODEL WITH JAPAN DOUBLING ITS IMPORTS FROM BRAZIL AND INVESTING IN BRAZIL ON THE SCALE OF THE US. LARGER DAILIES HAVE DETAILED ECONOMIC AGREEMENTS AND TREATED THEM AS MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS BY THE GOVERNMENT, PLAYING UP "COMPLEMENTARITY" OF TWO ECONOMIES. PRESS IS ECHOING FOREIGN MINISTRY'S LINE THAT AGREEMENTS SIGNIFY OPENING OF MAJOR NEW FOREIGN POLICY OPTION FOR BRAZIL WHICH, MORE THAN THE EUROPEAN OPTION, SEEMS CERTAIN TO BE ECONOMICALLY FRUITFUL.

4. BRAZIL AS MEDIATOR BETWEEN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND LDCS. PRESS EMPHASIZED PRESIDENT GEISEL'S REJECTION OF PRIME MINISTER MIKI'S SUGGESTION THAT GOB HAD AN IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL ROLE AS A MEDIATOR BETWEEN LDCS AND INDUSTRIALIZED WORLD. IN INTERVIEWS GEISEL ADMITTED THAT BRAZIL WAS IN SOMEWHAT BETTER POSITION THAN MOST OF THE LDCS, BUT
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EMPHASIZED THAT BRAZIL COULD NOT PLAY MEDIATOR'S ROLE WHILE SHE STILL WAS UNDERDEVELOPED, AS EVIDENCED BY HER LOW PER CAPITA INCOME, AND STRESSED THAT BRAZIL BELONGED WITH THE GROUP OF 77. HE CITED, HOWEVER, JAPANESE-BRAZILIAN AGREEMENTS AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE DESIRABLE KIND OF NORTH-SOUTH COOPERATION THAT SHOULD BE ACHIEVED IN AN INTERDEPENDENT WORLD.

5. OPTIONS. PRESS IS ALSO HIGHLIGHTING PRESIDENTIAL COMMENTARY STRESSING MORE INDEPENDENT BRAZILIAN FOREIGN POLICY. ACCORDING TO GEISEL, BRAZIL IS "NOW INITIATING A NEW CYCLE, OPENING UP INTERNATIONALLY, MAKING ITSELF BETTER KNOWN, AND AMPLIFYING BRAZIL'S PRESTIGE OVERSEAS". THE PRESIDENT ALSO INDICATED THAT MIKI'S INVITATION TO BRAZIL TO BECOME A MEDIATOR BETWEEN THE RICH AND POOR NATIONS WAS RECOGNITION OF BRAZIL'S INTERNATIONAL STATUS.

6. BRAZIL AND THE US. RE RELATIONS WITH THE INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES, GEISEL NOTED DURING A PRESS CONFERENCE, "WE ARE A COUNTRY TIGHTLY LINKED TO THE US. WE ARE FRIENDS OF THE US FOR MANY YEARS AND HAVE A FRIENDSHIP BASED IN GREAT PART ON OUR GEOGRAPHIC PROXIMITY. RELATIONS ARE TENDING TO GROW AND DEVELOP IN SPITE OF OBSTACLES WHICH COME UP FROM TIME TO TIME IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD". HIS COMMENT OFFSET AN EARLIER STATEMENT TO JAPANESE PRESS BY MINISTER OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE SEVERO GOMES THAT BRAZIL "WAS DISTANCING ITSELF FROM THE UNITED STATES". THE MINISTER ADDED THAT CLOSER JAPANESE- BRAZILIAN ECONOMIC RELATIONS ALSO HAD A POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE.

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7. HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY. IN MAKING POINT THAT BRAZILIAN POLITICAL MODEL MUST REFLECT THE PECULIAR CIRCUMSTANCES OF BRAZIL, GEISEL NOTED THAT JAPANESE GOVERNMENT AT NO TIME COMMENTED ON BRAZIL'S INTERNAL POLITICS. IN CONTRAST, PRESIDENT WAS QUOTED AS STATING THAT "THE AMERICANS, FOR EXAMPLE, WANT EVERY ONE TO BE LIKE THEM, TO ADOPT THEIR MODEL. BUT WE MUST NOT BE BOTHERED BY THESE CRITICS."

8. OTHER STATE VISITS. THE PRESIDENT TOLD PRESS THAT HIS VISITS TO JAPAN, FRANCE AND UK HAD RECIPROCATED VISIT BY HEADS OF STATE OR GOVERNMENT TO BRAZIL, IN ADDITION TO HAVING SUBSTANTIVE BASES. WHILE HE HAD INVITATIONS, HE PLANNED NO OTHER STATE VISITS BEYOND HIS NOVEMBER BORDER MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT OF PERU. IN DISPUTED VERSIONS OF WHAT FOREIGN MINISTER SILVEIRA ALLEGEDLY TERMS UPCOMING "INDISPENSIBLE" VISITS, PRESS IS SPECULATING THAT GEISEL SOON BOUND FOR MOSCOW, BUCHAREST IN THE WAKE OF THE TRADE MISSION NOW IN EASTERN EUROPE, THE MIDDLE EAST, US, CANADA, MEXICO, FRG AND PORTUGAL.

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9. BRAZILIAN PARTICIPATION IN COMMODITY CARTELS. NOTING THAT BRAZIL HAD SUFFERED AT THE HANDS OF OPEC, GEISEL REITERATED SEVERAL TIMES THAT THE GOB OPPOSED CARTELS. BRAZIL DID NOT PLAN TO PARTICIPATE IN "THE IRON ORE CARTEL." GEISEL DID LEAVE THE DOOR OPEN TO "CONSIDERATION OF THE HYPOTHESIS OF PARTICIPATION IN A CARTEL IF PRICES OF ORE WERE TO DESCEND TO SUCH A POINT THAT THEY PREJUDICED OUR PRODUCTION AND EXPORTATION OF ORE." REGARDING COCOA, COFFEE, AND SUGAR, HE SAID BRAZIL TRIES TO OBTAIN PRODUCER-CONSUMER AGREEMENTS IN ORDER TO ASSURE A "SATISFACTORY PRICE FOR PRODUCERS" AND TO PREVENT CONSUMERS FROM BEING FACED WITH "A VERY HIGH PRICE".

10. COMMENT: ONCE AGAIN PRESIDENT HAS USED STATE VISIT AS AN OCCASION TO ADDRESS A BROAD RANGE OF INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC POLICIES PRIMARILY FOR BRAZILIAN AUDIENCE. GEISEL'S WILLINGNESS TO SPEAK TO PRESS WITH UNCHARACTERISTIC OPENNESS IS A GENUINE PLUS FOR HIM AT HOME, THOUGH HIS OBJECTIVE IN PART IS PROBABLY TO DEMONSTRATE TO FOREIGN AUDIENCE THE MODERATION AND OPENNESS OF A MAN WHO PRESIDES OVER AN AUTHORITARIAN REGIME.

11. SCOPE AND ENTHUSIASTIC NATURE OF BRAZILIAN PRESS COVERAGE INDICATES THAT GEISEL HAS BEEN SKILLFUL WITH PRESS, FIRST BY ALLOWING THEIR CLOSE INVOLVEMENT IN THE TRIP IN SUCH LARGE NUMBERS, AND SECONDLY BY RELAXING BARRIERS OF FORMALITY THAT HAVE PREVENTED EASY DIALOGUE IN THE PAST AT HOME. THE PRESIDENT'S PRESENTATION OF THIRD WORLD AND NATIONALISTIC VIEWS HAS BEEN WELL RECEIVED BY MUCH OF BRAZILIAN

PRESS, OFFSETTING TO A CONSIDERABLE DEGREE THE NEGATIVE IMPACT OF THE POOR PROSPECTS FOR LIBERALIZATION REVEALED IN THE PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS ON DOMESTIC POLITICS.

12. REGARDING BRAZIL'S ROLE IN THE NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE, THE JAPANESE COMMITTED A GAFFE IN BRAZILIAN EYES IN URGING ON BRAZIL THE ROLE OF MEDIATOR. THE GOB HAS ALWAYS BEEN UNCOMFORTABLE WITH THIS IDEA -- IN GREAT PART BECAUSE BRAZIL LACKS FULL TRUST OF THE G-77. FOR THE SAME REASON, BRAZIL IS NOT IN POLITICAL POSITION TO BREAK WITH THE G-77 ON MAJOR ISSUES UNLESS POWERFUL BRAZILIAN INTERESTS ARE DIRECTLY AT STAKE. THEREFORE, IT CAME AS NO CONFIDENTIAL

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SURPRISE THAT GEISEL SAID IN TOKYO THAT BRAZIL IS IN LDC GROUP OF COUNTRIES, AND THAT BRAZILIAN PARTICIPATION IN OECD WOULD BE A FALSE POSITION. STILL, GEISEL'S COMMENTS MADE CLEAR TO THE HOME AUDIENCE THAT BRAZIL'S FOREIGN POLICY OF IDENTIFICATION WITH THE THIRD WORLD WAS HIS AND NOT JUST SILVEIRA'S WORK. BRAZIL'S PRAGMATIC APPROACH IN THIRD-WORLD BODIES AND THE NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE WAS REFLECTED IN GEISEL'S COMMENTS THAT JAPAN AND BRAZIL ARE PLEDGED TO "HARMONIZING" WORK IN THE NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE AND TO OBTAIN "GREATER COOPERATION" FOR LDC.

13. ON BALANCE, WE BELIEVE THAT THE RESULTING IMAGE OF GEISEL AS STATESMAN, RECOGNIZED AS SUCH BY A DYNAMIC MODERN SOCIETY LIKE THAT OF JAPAN, TOGETHER WITH HIS SKILLED PRESS RELATIONS HAS ALREADY CONTRIBUTED TO PRESIDENT'S DOMESTIC POPULARITY AND PRESTIGE. EVEN HIS NEGATIVE REMARKS ABOUT LIBERALIZATION WERE COUCHED IN REASONED, ALMOST SENTIMENTAL GRANDFATHERLY TERMS WHICH SOFTENED THEIR IMPACT. JOHNSON

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